

# Timeline of the Patrick Brown sex-ed letter scandal



[23.09.2016 Jessica Smith Cross](#) From [QP BRIEFING](#)

The **Patrick Brown** sex-ed saga has been a long and confusing one.

In order to help clarify things, we've put together a timeline. It includes the play-by-play of the sex-ed letter scandal itself, as well as Brown's votes and public statements on related values issues.

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June 8, 2005 — As a Conservative candidate, Brown [attends a rally against same-sex marriage with social conservative Charles McVety](#), president of the Institute for Canadian Values and Canada Christian College.

Jan. 23, 2006 — Brown is elected MP for Barrie.

April 20, 2010 — The updated sex-ed curriculum, which had been quietly posted to a government website in January, comes to light when a "family-focused" curriculum raises an alarm about it. Then-Premier [Dalton McGuinty stands by it](#).

April 22, 2010 — McGuinty [backs down and shelves the curriculum update](#).

2010 – 2013 — Brown earns [a green light from Campaign Life Coalition](#) for voting on the socially conservative side of values issues, including: for Bill C-510, which would have criminalized coercing pregnant women into having abortions (Dec. 15, 2010); against Bills C-389 and C-279, which would have added "gender identity" and "gender expression" to the Human Rights Act and Criminal Code, giving legal protections to transgender Canadians, (Feb. 9, 2011, June 2, 2012, March 20, 2013); for Motion 312 from MP **Stephen Woodworth**, which called for Parliament to review the section of the Criminal Code that states a child becomes a human being only at the moment of complete birth (Sept. 26, 2012).

Sept. 28, 2014 — The Globe and Mail [publishes a story on Brown](#), in which he said of abortion: “I will not change the status quo and I will oppose any effort to do so,” and, “We’re not going to change the status quo we have in Ontario today in any fashion.”

Feb. 23, 2015 — Minister **Liz Sandals** [unveils the sex-ed curriculum update](#). It's substantially the same as the 2010 update, plus some extra updating on modern technology.

Feb. 24, 2015 — Brown, now a PC leadership candidate, attends a rally against the sex-ed curriculum. He [puts out a statement](#) that says teachers should teach facts about sex education, not values, and only parents can decide what is age-appropriate for their child. He was later endorsed by MPP **Monte McNaughton**, who has been overtly against the sex-ed curriculum and runs to the right of MPP **Christine Elliott**, who supports the curriculum.

April 30, 2015 — Brown is running in the leadership race and [emails Jack Fonseca of Campaign Life Coalition](#) that he will repeal the curriculum. “I say it everywhere!” he writes.

July 29, 2015: [Toronto Life publishes a Q&A with Brown](#). “My thinking has evolved over time, and I now support same-sex marriage.” On the curriculum, he said, “I’m comfortable with teachings on sexual orientation and gender identity.” On voting against extending human rights legislation to transgender Canadians, he said, “It was a long time ago. And many of my constituents felt that bill pushed special instead of equal rights.”

Aug. 27, 2015 — Brown is running in the Simcoe North byelection, to get a seat in the legislature. [He texts McVety](#) that he’s never espoused “support for teaching gender identity sexual orientation and same-sex marriage.” He says that everyone will get a “lit drop” about his opposition to the sex-ed curriculum after the election. “Until then let me win the byelection. This is a distraction,” he texted. The lit drop never happened.

Sept. 3, 2015 — Brown is elected MPP for Simcoe North.

May 17, 2016 — Brown speaks about his more progressive stances with the [Globe and Mail](#), and says the debate over same-sex marriage is over. He suggests his votes in the House of Commons weren’t his choice: “Those stories of the Prime Minister’s Office being centralized ... there might have been a little truth to that.”

May 27, 2016 — Brown attends the federal Conservative convention and [votes to ditch the party’s heterosexual definition of marriage](#).

June 19, 2016 — In an interview with [The Canadian Press](#), Brown says he [won’t repeal the curriculum](#) if he’s elected premier.

August 12 – 18 — **Nicolas Pappalardo**, Brown’s chief of staff, has discussions with the head of Parents as First Educators (PAFE) about Brown’s stance on the sex-ed curriculum. [She alleges](#) they negotiated about the wording of a letter Brown would send out, and that while she preferred he promise to repeal the curriculum, Brown preferred the word “scrap.” Pappalardo was not pleased that PAFE was endorsing independent candidate **Queenie Yu**, who was running on the sole issue of repealing the curriculum, over Brown.

Aug. 24, 2016 — The date on the letter with Brown’s signature promising that his government would “scrap” the sex-education curriculum.

Aug. 25, 2016 —Pappalardo emails activist **Granic Allen** and Yu the letter, telling her it will be distributed over the weekend.

Aug. 26: [Sun columnist Christina Blizzard writes about the letter](#) being distributed to voters. PC MPP McNaughton tweets a photo of himself campaigning at Woodside Square in Scarborough, with a team that appears to be distributing the letter, across the road from an advance polling station.

Brown's office [initially gives the media statements defending the letter](#).

Aug. 27: [Brown tweets](#) about the media interest in the letter. He doesn’t dispute the letter, or say if he’ll repeal the curriculum or not. He said he supports “an updated curriculum that takes into account changing attitudes and world in which children now dwell,” and says the whole thing is really about parental consultation.

Aug. 28, 2016 — Brown has conference call with concerned PC MPPs and party officials about the letter, [according to the Star](#).

Aug. 29, 2016 — [Brown’s op-ed in the Star is published](#). He said he supports the curriculum and the letter suggesting otherwise was a "mistake," which he suggested came from the “campaign in Scarborough—Rouge River,” but said he was taking responsibility for it. He writes, “I will never support removing LGBT sensitivity or combating homophobia from schools. I will always support consulting with parents and giving them a voice, but I will never support intolerance in our society.”

Aug. 30, 2016 — Brown does the media rounds, giving interview after interview, repeating the messages from his op-ed. He said, repeatedly, that he did not see the letter before it went out and that the word “scrap” went too far. He said it was a mistake made by the local campaign, but refuses to go into details. He [tells QP Briefing](#) he's always had progressives views, had marched in the Barrie Pride Parade six or seven years ago and had only voted against same-sex marriage because it was his party's platform commitment (but, in fact, it was a free vote).

Sept. 1, 2016 — PC candidate **Raymond Cho** won the Scarborough—Rouge River byelection. PC Party president [Rick Dykstra tells CP24](#) he knew about the sex-ed letter before it went out.

Sept. 2, 2016 —Yu sends the email Pappalardo had sent her to The Canadian Press, which [breaks the news that Brown’s own office](#) had been involved in the sex-ed letter, not only the local campaign, as he’d said.

Sept. 12, 2016 — [Brown holds a media availability](#) following the Speech from the Throne. He was asked repeatedly to make a distinction between not having seen the letter itself and not having known that a sex-ed letter would be sent out — but Brown would only repeat that he hadn't "seen" it. Asked about his change of heart on the curriculum, he denies having one, and said he’d never said sex-ed shouldn't be taught in schools.

Sept. 13, 2016 — Brown [says he's had a change a of heart](#) on whether or not teachers have a role in teaching values to kids, and disavows what he'd said about that during his leadership campaign. He now believes they should teach subjects such as LGBT relationships.

Sept. 19, 2016 — [Fonseca goes public](#) with the emails Brown had sent him during the leadership race promising to repeal the curriculum, and accuses him of lying.

Brown [issues a statement that night](#) saying that his views on the curriculum, “have evolved.” “Time and the evidence of my own eyes tells me that I was mistaken. Concerns were exaggerated and have not borne out. I’ve met with many educators, parents, and school boards — some of whom opposed the curriculum — and they are satisfied with how it’s been implemented. Further, I have since come to the conclusion that significant opposition to the curriculum was rooted in a refusal to accept LGBT elements into the curriculum.”

Sept. 20, 2016 — Allen [goes public](#) about her discussions with Brown’s office during the Scarborough–Rouge River byelection campaign, and says she was told he had direct input on promising, in the letter, to “scrap” the curriculum.

Sept. 22, 2016 — [McVety goes public](#) about his texts with Brown during his 2015 campaign in Simcoe North, disavowing his interview with Toronto Life and promising to trumpet his opposition to the sex-ed curriculum after the election (which never happened).

*Correction: This story has been updated to correct the date of the Conservative Party of Canada convention.*